



Members of the New Media Retailer team display new t-shirts to promote unity.

Progress Chenango

05

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ALDI is coming to Town of Norwich, summer 2017

By CAMERON TURNER
Sun Sports Editor

NORWICH – At the north end of Norwich, New York along State Highway route 12, construction can be seen where a new addition to everyday life will be added this coming summer season – the addition of ALDI.

The first ALDI store opened in Germany in the early 1960s, and its first US store in southeastern Iowa in 1976. Founded by the Albrecht family, the name ALDI comes from Albrecht and Discount.

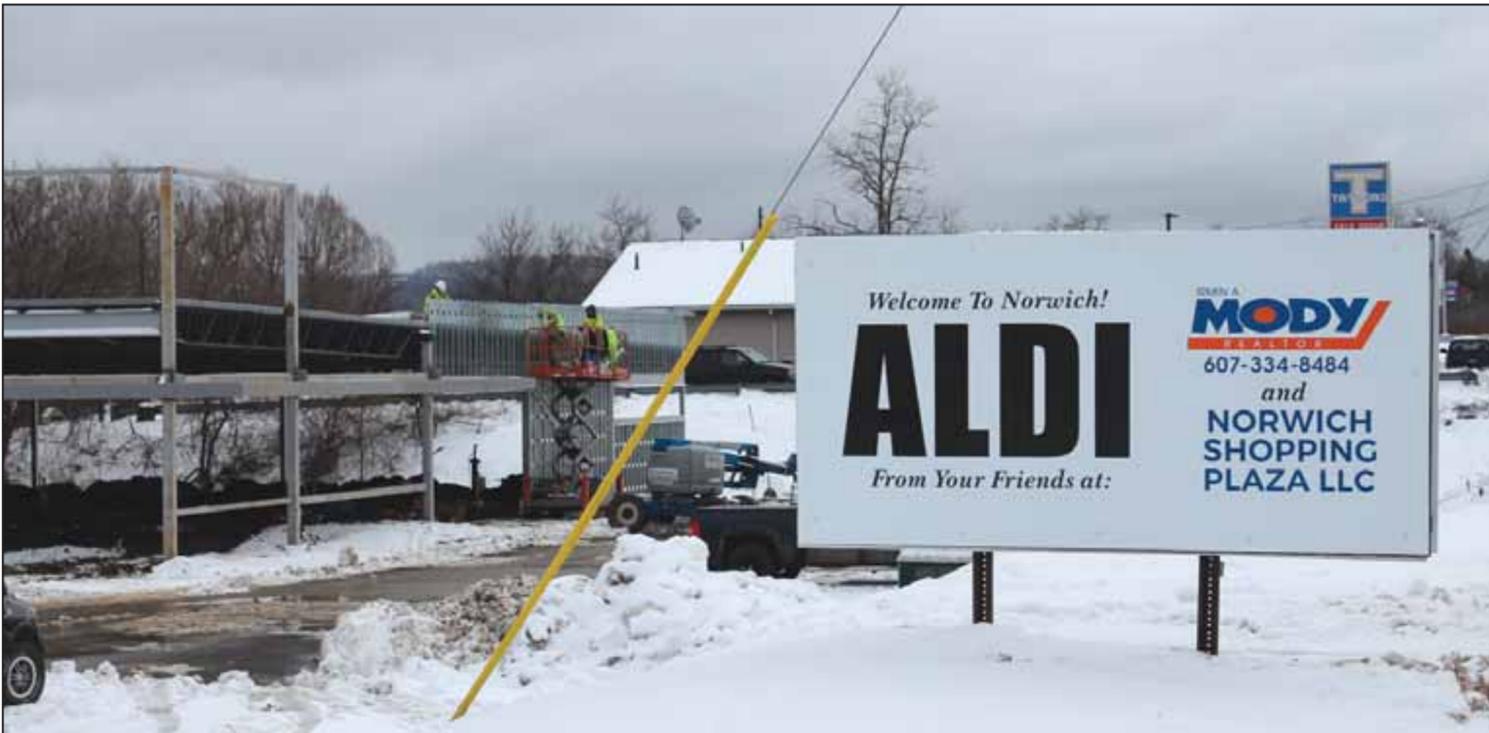
Now in 2017, ALDI – known to the general public for their more than 90 percent exclusive brand food products and quarter cart rental system – has managed to grow their once small establishment to a chain of stores located all across the world – having more than 1,600 stores in 35 US states alone, employing over 24,000 people.

This growth has now come to the small-town Norwich community, who has welcomed the company with open arms thus far – as ALDI opened their construction project at the Norwich North plaza late in 2016.

With rumors flying about the famous grocery store – regarding when it will be officially opening their doors to the public, the tension has peaked as the new year rolled in and with it, came more snow and more construction.

“We look at a lot of factors before choosing an ALDI location, like population density, proximity to competition, cost of the property and traffic patterns. We want to be conveniently located for our shoppers,” said Aaron Sumida, ALDI Tully Division Vice President.

According to the United States census bureau, as of 2015, 6,968 individuals call



Cameron Turner Photos

The construction of ALDI in Norwich is underway.

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Village of Oxford: The crossroads of progress and success

By MATTHEW WHITE

While progress in the Village of Oxford may not appear as prominently as it does in other areas of the county, the small Village in the center of greater Chenango. Last year, Oxford's leaders continued to work to ensure that Oxford's future is as successful as its past. The Village has established a vision for the community incorporating the input from a broad spectrum of constituents.

Mayor Terry Stark of the Village sat down with The Evening Sun to shed some light into how his small village continues to meet the demands of its residents throughout 2016 and offer some insight into what future progress looks like moving forward.

The village recognizes that geographically its one square mile represents less than 2 percent of the Town's total 62 square miles. However, the Village's population of about 1,500 residents and another 500 town residents living within 2 miles of the village represent more than 50 percent of the total town population of approximately 4,000 residents.

“The significance of this concentration of population is that much of the future prosperity of the community will be realized by creating a sense of home and place by blending the surrounding town's agriculture community with the village's residential community,” said Stark “We plan achieving this by cultivating a close knit and enduring Village retail and commercial business core, providing essential easily assessable community goods and services, maintaining the historical character of Village architecture, and taking advantage of the natural beauty of Village Parks and the Chenango River.”

What is essential to this plan, according to Stark, is that the

critical infrastructure must be improved; and historical landmark buildings such as the Middle School, Oxford Library, Village Hall—also known as the “Bank building”—and the Post Office must be maintained. “The collaboration and cooperation of the Business community with the governing bodies of the Village, Town and School District coupled with the support of residents, service organizations and many local and regional funding agencies have established short and long term Community goals.”

Progress made toward these goals in 2016 along with contin-

ued plans for 2017 are many. In 2016, the Village completed a \$2.7 million-dollar upgrade to the 25-year-old Waste Water Plant. The final phase of this multi-year project was completed in the summer of 2016. The project addressed all wastewater capital needs for at least the next 25 years.

Likewise, a half-million-dollar phase-one roof and masonry restoration to the Village Hall was likewise put to bed.

“Funding for this project was

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'In Your Own Words'

Thomas Sutton



network of community events that draw thousands from outside our area, including The General Clinton Canoe Regatta, The Chenango Blues Fest, Colorscape Chenango, Gus Macker, and Pumpkin Fest to name just a few.

Most importantly, I believe we have a community bursting with caring, hardworking, passionate and humble people. To me, it's really the people that determine the quality of a community. It seems like every time there is a worthy cause, a personal tragedy, a need or concern, individuals and businesses within our community unite to help make a difference. That is the essence of who we are and why I so enjoy living here.

Of course we'll continue to face challenges in the future. But knowing we will face them together with passionate and caring people provides a great sense of comfort. While we may not be in utopia, when I step back a bit, I realize how blessed I am to have attended schools here (and my children too), have access to quality healthcare, work for an incredible employer, can pick-up a local newspaper when so many no longer exist, attend church, enjoy numerous recreational opportunities and attend so many first class community events all right here in our community. Maybe we shouldn't take these things for granted (along with a lot more)...just saying. I look forward to the future of our community and I plan to be part of it for many years to come.

solid school systems that provide the foundation for students to excel in the workforce and achieve higher levels of post-secondary education; a performing hospital that provides necessary, local and quality healthcare; and, world class employers that provide services and products used around the globe.

We have a daily newspaper that provides local news, sports and information relevant to our community/residents; a broad network of churches serving many denominations; and, a state of the art YMCA that is a valuable resource for residents of all ages. These are all packaged in an incredible outdoor space that provides scenic beauty and many recreational opportunities. Chenango County residents also enjoy a

In my own words.....

I have been fortunate to spend most of my life living in Chenango County. I was born, raised, and outside of attending college, have spent my adult life here in Chenango County. In today's society it is certainly easy to find flaws in everything around us and take the viewpoint that the "grass is greener" somewhere else. While our community certainly has challenges, I for one, remain thankful for all this area has to offer and optimistic about its future as well. Again, it is easy to find negative attributes, and clearly some do exist. However, I believe we have a lot to appreciate!

In my opinion, we have many subtle assets that make the quality of life in our area appealing. These include



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ALDI set to open in Norwich this summer -

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Norwich their home. With this population of approximately 7,000 people living within a roughly 2.12 square mile area the demand for grocery stores is apparent. Norwich currently has four major grocery stores within their city or town limits supplying said citizens with options. However, no such store occupies the northern part of the city, forcing all traffic to stay centrally or southern bound.

According to Sumida, the closest nearby ALDI store to Norwich include the ALDI locations of: Chenango Bridge, Cortland and Oneonta - each location coming in at under 27 miles from the upcoming Norwich location.

Adding another competitor into the mix of options when it comes to food shopping in the community, ALDI claims to offer something beyond an 'Albrecht Discount' on their prices.

"We have a different style when it comes to grocery shopping. ALDI is an easy-to-shop grocery store that saves shoppers money on the groceries they buy most, including: fresh meat, bread, dairy, produce and household items for up to 50 percent less than traditional grocery stores," said Sumida. "We keep our costs down with a simple, back-to-basics approach to retailing."

People who may never have shopped at ALDI in other locations across New York State, might find the process different than what other local stores will offer. However, the difference is what Sumida insists will keep their shoppers returning again and again.

"ALDI doesn't have hidden costs because we choose to save shoppers money rather than have non-essential grocery store services like in-store banking, pharmacies and check cashing. We display our products right in their boxes, ask customers to deposit a quarter for a shop-

ping cart and encourage them to bring reusable grocery bags, all to save money. Those savings are always passed on to our shoppers," said Sumida. "What really makes us stand out is that we consistently deliver premium groceries at everyday low prices, including better-for-you alternatives, such as organic produce, USDA Choice beef, the liveGfree™ gluten-free product line and the SimplyNature line of products free from over 125 artificial ingredients and preservatives."

With an open intention of saving their customers money, while preserving the immediate and long-term image and wellbeing of their store and surrounding environment, ALDI looks to attract any and all customers.

"More than 90 percent of the products in our stores are ALDI exclusive brands, with a few national brands mixed in. Most of the national brands we carry are because many of our customers have told us they have strong preferences for this particular product and they'd like the added convenience of being able to buy it when shopping at ALDI," said Sumida in regards to the community feedback that ALDI is perceptive to. "All exclusive brand food products are free of certified synthetic colors, partially hydrogenated oils and added MSG. And we stand by the quality of the products we sell in our stores. We've learned that while our low prices may attract first-time customers, they become loyal fans because of our quality and value."

Bringing a new business into a community where four already established companies hold stake in the market-share can be a difficult task to overcome but ALDI has set their sights on a new frontier in New York State and that is Norwich, New York. According to Sumida, ALDI intends to complete construction on the Norwich store during the spring months of

2017, with the hope to have the store open sometime in the summer months. Grand opening date and planned festivities pending.

"While we can't comment on other grocers' prices, we can tell you we take a simple approach to grocery shopping that translates into big savings for our shoppers," said Sumida. "In fact, smart shoppers have found that switching from national brands to ALDI exclusive brands can save them up to 50 percent on their grocery bill."

With this big potential savings for Norwich individuals to take advantage of, one is to wonder why the expansion into the local community. To which Sumida insisted that sales were up and when sales are up for a business that traces their roots to a small-town business some 103 years ago, that means returning full circle to give back to smaller communities where growth and potential progress is abundant. ALDI will look to add the population of Norwich to their more than 36 million customers that they already serve each month, come summer 2017.

"As a private company, we don't share financial information, but I can tell you that sales are up," said Sumida. "More and more people are checking out ALDI, and they're discovering the savings secret: shoppers don't need a membership card or coupons to get great prices on the groceries customers buy the most. Our low prices get people in the door, but it's our great quality that keeps them coming back."



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New Media Retailer:

One step ahead

By GRADY THOMPSON
Sun Staff Writer

When it comes to the business of having to conform with the constantly evolving times, there are few companies who are as familiar and comfortable with change as New Media Retailer.

New Media Retailer, otherwise known as NMR, is a company headquartered in Norwich that provides various retailers around the country with a number of marketing services, including website construction and maintenance, improved search engine success, enhanced social media presence, and much more.

"We strive to provide the services that businesses realize are important, but can seem intimidating or overwhelming," said NMR Director of Marketing and Corporate Relations Francesca Baio. "We are always looking for ways to integrate additional services that make us more valuable as a company, while also making the businesses we work with more valuable to their customers."

Formally founded as NMR in 2009 by Jeanne Brightman, owner, and Craig Ballinger, Chief Technology Officer, and the late, Joe Root, the company now has over 20 employees and offices in Norwich and Wake Forest, NC.

As digital media continues to evolve with each passing year, Baio says the staff at NMR are constantly looking for ways to adapt and educate themselves. 2016 was no exception, and NMR underwent numerous developments and improvements in-house over the course of the past year to continue to offer as many valuable services to retailers as possible. This was a company-wide effort, every department really stepped up to make us more competitive than ever, but our production and IT teams, lead by Janet Thomas, Production Manager really had a more demanding year than ever. They learned new skills and technologies, all while keeping up with the demand of the every-day work flow.

"The biggest thing in 2016 was developing new technology," said Baio. "Updated consumer technology has pushed for website to be better and easier than ever to navigate from a variety of smartphones, tablets, etc. This was a huge push for us in terms of getting new cus-



Grady Thompson Photo

New Media Retailer employees at their headquarters in Norwich pose for a photo-op in October of 2016.

tomers and migrating existing customers to a new platform."

Baio says that NMR's services aim to help small businesses compete online, and one industry in particular they have focused on as of late is the pet store industry. In the past year, NMR has helped served over 1,600 retail locations made up of independent pet, lumber, rental, etc. compete with big name, box stores by managing their websites, social media, and emails lists.

One facet that makes NMR unique is their commitment to their culture. Over the past few years, NMR has made great strides to make their work place one that everyone in the company enjoys. From introducing 4-day work weeks, to improving their vacation policy and even giving employees their birthday as a paid day off, NMR strives to really be a fun workplace for everyone. This year they are even getting an extra day paid day off to

enjoy a longer weekend for the 4th of July. "Work is something everyone has to do, why not make it enjoyable?" says Baio. The company celebrates in some way each month with "fun money" – this can range from catered lunches to getting branded apparel to celebrating anniversaries, etc.

Investing in our culture is something that has made us a better company. Happy employees lead to everyone working harder to help our company succeed. "It's been amazing to see our company grow in such a unique way. But we all enjoy each other, so we learn together and help one another because we want to," says Baio. This year NMR will celebrate their second year in their new office space, 29 Lackawanna Ave., "our new office was a transition but it's one that's worked out beautifully. Having an open layout has allowed all of us to learn from one another in a very organic way.

It's important to NMR to continue reinvest in their employees, they kicked the year off with two promotions from within, promoting employees Kyle Famolaro to Customer Service Manager and Katherine Dawson to Senior Marketing Specialist.

Despite working with customers across the nation, NMR has no ambition to move from Norwich.

"Norwich will always be our home. We have lots of ties to this area and most of our growth will definitely take place here in this office," said Baio. "But an obstacle that a lot of businesses face is that it's sometimes hard to find people with the programming and IT skill set that we are looking for to help our business grow."

To address this issue, Baio says that some of the NMR management has moved to North Carolina where they are exposed to innovational concepts regarding the industry.

"Craig [Ballinger] went down there first, followed by Michael Kelly (Senior Web Developer) and Keegan [Edwards, NMR President] and Robert [Martin, NMR Vice President] moved their this year, and it has opened up a lot of opportunities. Adapting is a huge part of our industry and so is continuous education, because if we aren't on top of the next thing that comes out, somebody else is going to be," said Baio.

As for 2017, the NMR team plans to implement some of the innovative con-

cepts that they have encountered including moving away from website templates to create the utmost unique look for all, updating technology to enable unique requests from customers, and staying on top of the most effective way to use social media and email.

"We changed a lot in terms of the way we operated in 2016," said Baio. "2017 is going to be just as important for us to adapt and evolve so that we can continue to offer the most up-to-date and valuable services."

In closing, Jeanne Brightman wants to express her appreciation for the hard work and innovative thinking, and all the contributions from the staff.



Submitted Photo

Members of the New Media Retailer team display new t-shirts to promote unity.



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Ina M. Homovich

Village of Oxford –

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

through a series of grants from the New York State Parks & Recreation, R.C. Smith Foundation, Meade Foundation, N.Y. State Office of Court Administration, and the local community," said Stark.

According to Stark, phase-two of the project will be to seek grant funding in 2017 for an elevator for the building that will allow development of more efficient use of the building's second and third floors. This will be followed by a phase-three in 2018 which will address a rear entry to the building, new landscaped parking, and blending the open areas into the historical nature of the downtown core surrounding Lafayette Park.

Across town, the \$388,000 purchase of 70-foot Aerial/Pumper Fire Apparatus for the Oxford Fire Department was finally completed after years of negotiation, fund raising and searching for the best value across the United States. The combination apparatus allows the village to replace two aging vehicles and will improve Oxford Fire Department's effectiveness in responding to structure fires of multi-story buildings.

"An astounding eighty percent of expense was covered though the Oxford Fire Department Capital reserve, established from revenue generated from the towns of Oxford, Preston, and

Smithville via Fire protective services contracts," said Stark. "Without the support from these towns, the Village could not afford to replace the ever-increasing cost of fire-fighting equipment."

One highly visible improvement that came into fruition in Oxford was the unveiling of a \$250,000 "Safe Routes to School" project.

This program is designed to encourage children from kindergarten through eighth grade to walk or bike to school, and the project included new sidewalks on Columbia Street, South Washington Ave, Main Street, as well as Fort Hill Park.

"The Fort Hill Park section required replacement of historic bluestone in kind to maintain the historical character of the area. The remaining deteriorated and uneven walks were replaced with new concrete walks and ramps resulting in more than 2000 linear feet of new sidewalk. Moreover, funds were also made available to produce brochures, conduct Bike rodeos, and install electronic speed signs. The joint school and village efforts will culminate during the 2017 spring as we encourage children to safely walk or bike to school," said Stark. "This will be healthy for children as well as reduce the daily congestion created by many vehicles now accessing the area to drop off or pick up children."

The federally funded project was administered by the New York State Department



The center of Oxford, NY.

of Transportation and whose help made the project much easier to complete.

But Sidewalks were not the only street-scape projects that garnered attention in 2016. The Village DPW completed \$250,000 worth of street replacement projects. This included the milling and paving of Albany Street—which also serves as County Route 32 through the village—of about half-mile of roadway and the replacement of the Scott Street bridge culvert. The new Scott street bridge deck is expected to last 50 years and is replacing an old deteriorated deck that had threatened public safety for years.

\$20,000 purchase of playground Equipment for Boname Park. This project was designed and funded with the support of the

Oxford Lions, Rotary and Mason Service organizations as well as a grant from the R.C. Smith Foundation. Equipment will be installed as early in the spring of 2017 as possible. Next phase of recreational plan in 2017 is to secure funding for picnic tables and benches to be installed on the Main Street Bridge patio and adjacent Beyer Park.

The Village also collaborated with the Oxford school District in 2016 to provide a School Resource Officer (SRO) for up to 20 hours per week. The School identified a critical service need for a dedicated campus based SRO but had no administrative structure in place to provide the service. The Village Police Department had the authority, personnel, and expertise to provide the service but no funding. Consequently, an agreement between the school and

Village was signed to provide the service. The SRO is an employee of the Village Police Department but associated costs of the campus based officer are paid by the School. This is an example of sharing and providing services that neither the school or the village could provide separately.

The downtown green has long been considered the hub of the village. Over the past year, Oxford continued to support the Oxford Farmers' Market Group in 2016. The Farmers' market on Lafayette Park continued to expand in 2016 by offering more and diverse vendors as well as providing entertainment throughout the season. The Village Park is a good venue for the market as it centrally located in the Village business core, bustles with weekly activity for itself as well as creates traffic for other businesses. The Village provides

support by purchasing and installing seasonal banners, providing electricity as well as maintaining the park, fountain, and bandstand. Plans for 2017 are to purchase and install a park sound system, enhance park landscaping, and provide administrative services via the School's work-based learning program.

According to Stark, 2016 progress made and goals for 2017 recognize that the Village Center is the "hub" of cultural, governmental, and social interaction for the community.

Although nearly 34 percent of the assessed valuation within the Village is tax exempt (religious, educational, governmental), the Village enthusiastically accepts its unique role as the center of the Oxford community. The Village investment in protecting and enhancing this center as a daily and or weekly destination will convey to all Oxford stakeholders who visit a community "sense of place". This hometown feeling provides a perceived higher quality of life for those who live and work in Oxford.

Additionally, the investment to protect and enhance the village core will also preserve the unique qualities which set the Village and Town apart from many other communities. All these factors will help the community to attract new people to Oxford, anchor those who currently live in Oxford and provide a yearning in those who have left but now wish to return.

Success Story

Reputable Auto Center

At Reputable Auto Center LLC, we feel that buying a used car shouldn't have to be a struggle. As a member of the community, Reputable Auto Center LLC has an unparalleled reputation for quality sales, standing behind every vehicle to ensure customer satisfaction.

Owner Dave Everett has been in the automotive business since 1995, with previous locations in the greater Binghamton area. Dave has moved his dealership to Norwich in 2012 with the exciting opportunity to serve Chenango County and the surrounding areas with quality preowned vehicles. He opened his first new location at 6206 State Highway 12 Norwich, NY. Now with all the hard work and dedication to the business from Dave and his sales team, the business has grown to two separate locations. What started off being a small single car lot with roughly 20 vehicles, has grown into two separate car lots with a full service garage with approximately 30 to 50 preowned vehicles between the two.

In February of 2016 Dave opened the doors up to his second location at 5608 County Road 32 in Norwich. The new location offered an opportunity for rapid growth of the business. Now Reputable Auto Center LLC, not only is able to provide the community with quality used vehicles. But also with a full service garage for repairs. Reputable Auto Center LLC also offers a special financing program to those in the community who are turned down by other dealerships for having less than perfect credit.

Dave and his sales team William Olgesby and Ruthann Maricle are keen on providing excellent customer service. Over the years they have established trusting relationships with their customers. Many customers have expressed how Dave and his sales team go above and beyond to help them find a vehicle that suits them at a price they can afford!

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Sherburne sees changes in 2016, 2017

By MICHAELA WATTS
Sun Staff Writer

The Village of Sherburne has seen some major transformations during 2016. With businesses being added and removed from the downtown scene, grant funding, building renovations and general economical growth, Sherburne Mayor Bill Acee, has a lot to be excited for and gave a lengthy list of all that has happened to the Village.

New sidewalk paths have been installed through several located including by Big M, Gillian's Island, a new pedestrian bridge was added over Potash Creek and to the Crouse Center, replaced utility poles, planted 22 new trees of different species, cleared the upper Reservoir spillway of up-rooted and fallen trees, installed a new transformer bank for St Malachy's Church, and more. Sherburne has also began utilization of Village -installed fiber optic cable to network the villages desktops and servers through new electric hybrid volts from the NY Power Authorities.

Along with the improvements being done around the Village two well known businesses have been newly renovated. Stewart's Shops located on Main Street expanded while maintaining all of the former Stewart's products along with a greater selection of food items, such as freshly made pizza by the pie or slice, and made to order subs. They have also added a walk-in cooler, additional seating, expanded parking and fuel services. In addition to Stewarts, Save the Sherburne



Michaela Watts Photo

Sherburne saw the construction and opening of the new Stewarts Shop in the village.

Inn Restoration Project (SSIRP) primarily funded through several grants allowed for this historical landmark to be restored. The Sherburne Inn is a nationally registered historical building in Chenango County that was built in 1917. "While most of the exterior is nearly finished then next phase is to work on the roof and the interior of the Inn. Ben Eberhardt, who suc-

cessfully runs the Colgate Inn to assist with the future renovations and operations of the Inn through the Hospitality Group" said Board of Directors, President Kathleen Yavas.

"Whether its small or a large invest, its something that will constantly improve economical development among a rural area such as Sherburne", said Acee. While

the lost of three businesses were not taken lightly, Mayor Acee is has high hopes for the upcoming year. "I'm currently looking to update more of

the community side walks, downtown parks and walking bridges that connect Chapel Street to Chenango Ave. Continue to plant and refurbish the trees and bushes and adapt new energy resources."

Success Story

Mayhood's Sporting Goods

Mayhood's Sporting Goods, Inc. in Norwich NY has been in business since 1964. Merrit "Red" Mayhood started the business with night crawlers that he sold from the back porch of his Division Street home. In 1990 Mike Mayhood and his wife Barb purchased the business and three moves later ended up at their current location Route 12 South, Norwich NY. When Mike and Barb took over in 1991, they began expanding the business. This meant twelve-hour days seven days a week all while raising three wonderful girls. Today, the business is open seven days a week with eleven employees. Their expanded inventory now fills a 7000 square foot store equipped with ten archery lanes.

What started out with night crawlers has now grown to include several different types of live bait such as minnows, worms, grubs, crayfish and leeches. On top of that there are now aisles filled with hard and soft plastic lures, lines, rods and reels, trolling motors, line winding and enough terminal tackle to supply all of their valued customers.

They didn't stop at just expanding fishing, they expanded into the hunting field with firearms and archery equipment. Today, Mayhood's offers the largest selection in the area, of firearms and compound bows even catering to those who are left handed which is unheard of at the box stores.

In the firearm department which is always busy, Mayhood's currently offers name brands such as Savage, Remington, Mossberg, Smith & Wesson, Ruger, Browning, Kimber, Dan Wesson, CZ-USA and many more. They are proud to support law enforcement and first responders with Glock's blue label program, stop in and ask about it. Mayhood's has a huge selection of ammunition with many of those hard to find calibers everyone is looking for. Not to mention all the equipment needed to reload or begin reloading with powder, primers, cases and presses. Mayhood's also offers gun-smithing services like mounting and bore-sighting scopes.

With expert customer service and tailored set-up of your new bow, archery took off with names like PSE, Parker, Bear, TenPoint and their latest addition Mathews. Their custom arrows are a big hit each year along with the free 6 month archery lane use that comes with the purchase of a bow.

It wasn't long before Mike and Barb realized they needed to accessorize. Now carrying products by Bushnell, Primos, Summit Treestands, Moultrie Game Cameras, Weaver and many more. Along with the accessories, the clothing department features, boots, insulated underwear and outerwear. If you can't find what you're looking for, they special order at no additional cost.

Three departments that are currently growing are camping, boats and trapping. Kayaks, canoes, and pedal boats have been available for years, this year Lifetime Kayaks will be added. The trapping department which has traps, dye, wax, and lures has an entire aisle dedicated to the trappers. Camper's will find, hydration packs, tents, sleeping bags, and insect repellent.

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